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# HEROIC EPISTLE

T O

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE  
*LORD VISCOUNT SACKVILLE.*

Videſne Sacram metiente te viam  
Cum bis ter ulnarum togâ,  
Ut Ora vertat huc et huc euntium  
Liberrima Indignatio ?

HOR. EPOD.

L O N D O N :

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1783.



THE HONORABLE

THE SECRETARY OF THE



# DEDICATION.

*MY LORD*

THIS tribute of that *due* respect which I bear your Lordship, would have been ushered into the world almost as soon as you was ushered into the House of Peers, had not several accidents prevented the publication.

THIS delay may, in some respects, be favourable both to your Lordship and myself. You, my Lord, will not have reason to complain of a *sudden* attack ; nor shall I be charged with writing to the *newly* inflamed passions of my countrymen, or to excite the indignation of the Peers, or resentment of the

B

Commons



Commons of this Realm. Time, my Lord, that allwages the torture of distress, and mitigates the pain of the severest affliction, has now been afforded for accommodating the minds of all parties to the great event of your astonishing elevation. Our subsided passions now leave room for candour and justice.

HOWEVER others may be affected by this *tardy* publication I flatter myself, that the delay will be a powerful recommendation of the author to your Lordship; who, amidst the display of other great and distinguished virtues that characterize heroes, have ever shewn caution in the extreme, when *rapid* movements were in question, and *slow* execution of the wisest councils, and best concerted plans.

*I have the honour to be,*

*with all due respect,*

Oxford,  
Dec<sup>r</sup>. 5<sup>th</sup>. 1782.

*your Lordship's*

*most obedient, and most humble servant,*

THE AUTHOR



A N

## HEROIC EPISTLE, &c.

SON of QUIRINUS! or to greet thine ear,  
With sounds more pleasing, hail! thou new made Peer!  
In homage to thy moulted fame I bow,  
Perch'd on the coronet that decks thy brow:  
Well may it fit——pernicious gold may shine  
Round brows where sacred laurel ne'er would twine.  
The ROBE PATRICIAN now shall cover all;  
Disgrace no more degrade, or fear appal.  
The guilt is lost that once the conscious plain  
Of MINDEN blushing saw thro' all her slain.

Such



Such is the magic of this crimson vest,  
 When clasp'd with royal hands across the breast;  
 Vices deform'd and drest in Stygian gloom,  
 Virtue's fair port, and honour's form assume.  
 The charm of courts that operates so much,  
 More than king's evil cures by slightest touch.  
 Inspir'd by fumes of this omnific pow'r,  
 TORRIES to GEORGE THE THIRD libations pour:  
 It mounts the coward to the hero's place,  
 Wipes from the recreant brow each foul disgrace;  
 Cures all but CONSCIENCE—washes Æthiops white;  
 Makes night of noon-tide suns—and day of night;  
 Confounds, perverts all honours and degree:  
 And makes a hero e'en *Germaine*! of thee.

I HAVE no wish behind the scenes to steal,  
 To spy the movements of the common-weal;  
 To view the puppets, or the master's art,  
 And see how each puffed lordling plays his part;

How



How shifting ministers to court keep time,  
 And harlequin this great world's *Pantomime*.  
 Nor to that fatal closet would I creep,  
 Where folks are tickl'd till they fall asleep.  
 Nor would I, all state secrets to unfold,  
 Give CÆSAR's lawful image stamp'd in gold.  
 It suits not us, plebean wights, to know,  
 The arts, and tricks of the state raree-show.  
 Or how imperial BRUNSWICK wears his face,  
 Now urges horrid war, and now the chace.  
 Or why as whim or faction give the word,  
 He now a button makes, and now a Lord.

OH! it would burst the very sides of spleen,  
 If all the latent springs of courts were seen.  
 For while we think grave wisdom guides the helm  
 Justice holds plea, and law supports the realm ;  
 Or seek of great events the greater cause,  
 And, reasoning deep, by analogic laws,

C

Say



Say that the spring must equal what it moves  
 In pow'r, and strength, and weight; that it behoves  
 The world's great movements on great hinge should turn,  
 And wisdom guide, as sure as fire can burn :  
 While thus we reason on the amplest scale,  
 Unconscious what minutiae prevail ;  
 How should we wonder, if behind the door,  
 Stood the chief mover, pathic, pimp, or whore ?

BUT tho' great Sir ! these thoughts in part are true,  
 I do not say that *one* applies to you.  
 From some great cause, no doubt, these honours spring,  
 Mantling your merit, issuing from your king.  
 In eye plebeian, dull's the visual ray ;  
 Objects that strike our sense must near us play.  
 Thy *distant* orb of merit to espy  
 Requires the Lynx-beam eye of Majesty.  
 And as the artist on this earthly sphere,  
 Draws by his glass, suns, moons, and stars, more near ;

That



That spots he can discern amid'st the blaze,  
 Beaming unfully'd brightness as we gaze :  
 So the keen searching of the royal eye,  
 Unseen by us, thy virtues may espy.  
 See the deep shades that sabled thee all o'er,  
 And black aspersions cast on thee before,  
 All bright'ning into merit's unstain'd hue ;  
 And give the CORONET, in *prize* to you.

2  
 AND if the golden round the brows adorn  
 Of virtue, may it never feel the thorn ;  
 May downy-peace the splendid circlet line :  
 If honour plume it, Peer ! that peace be thine.

BUT if the gorgeous pageant be design'd,  
 To balm the feelings of a wounded mind ;  
 And meant, by blazon of the shining ore,  
 Thy guilt to lessen, or to varnish o'er ;

To



To prove thy helmet 'gainst the public spear ;  
 Thy robe, a corset on the breast of fear :  
 O ! may it hang whene'er it presses thy head,  
 With weighty care as made of ten-fold lead.  
 Thy robe of state oppresses with galling pain,  
 And care, black care attendant, bear thy train.  
 And as ROME's nobles, FLAVIUS when they saw  
 Assume the Prætor's chair, and give the law,  
 With indignation dash'd their golden rings  
 To earth now deem'd debas'd dishonour'd things ;  
 From brows dishonour'd, may each patriot Peer  
 With like contempt their splendid badges tear ;  
 And those of inborn worth, with honest pride,  
 Unmantling, throw their *fully'd* robes aside.

O ! COULD the muse but raise the trump of fame,  
 And, justice bidding, loud proclaim thy name ;  
 How would she triumph in her heart felt lays,  
 How clap her wings with joy to sound thy praise.

BUT



BUT fate forbids—the public has decreed  
 A different sentence, and denies that meed.  
 Hear! if thou canst, the public voice at large:  
 Not I, but Britain's Genius brings the charge.

WHEN haughty GALLIA, proud to wreathe her chains  
 Round couchant Nations, chief where freedom reigns,  
 New forg'd the bolt of war with vengeful hand,  
 Her thunder pointed at this fated land;  
 Wide o'er GERMANIA's plains th' embattl'd hosts  
 Spread wide; beneath their feet whole realms were lost.  
 'Midst other heroes then you stood enroll'd;  
 Fair shone thy fame—and honour, ever bold,  
 Vaunted the chieftains of the Sackville blood,  
 Whose deeds on fame's recorded annals stood.

Now I conjure thee by thy country's fame,  
 By all the honours of thy ancient name,

D

The



The soldiers glory, and the chieftains cause,  
 By freedom's sacred name, and sacred laws,  
 By slaughter'd heroes unappeased Ghosts,  
 Of honest wounds who fell 'midst charging hosts,  
 Say, why with semblance of heroic mind,  
 Didst thou war's casque upon thy forehead bind?  
 Why, midst the kindling of BELLONA's fire,  
 Whose flightest sparks the noblest deeds inspire,  
 When call'd by duty, vict'ry spreading o'er,  
 That head which laurels never crown'd before;  
 When HONOUR pointed, and when FAME led on,  
 Why like a base born wretch, and recreant son,  
 Didst thou forget the glories of thy race,  
 And blot thy father's tablet with disgrace?  
 Where lurkt thy soul?—thy spirits how suppress?  
 No latent spark within thy frozen breast,  
 That Honour's breath could blow into a flame,  
 To light to glory or illumine thy name?

Ah!



Ah! what avail th' achievements of thy line!  
 No more supporters blaze, or diamonds shine.  
 The cresting star that us'd to flame o'er all,  
 Flung from it's heav'n of Fame, must downward fall.  
 No more its flame the purer Topaz yield,  
 The Ruby now shall *blush* o'er all the shield\*.  
 With more than aspic-dart must sting thy soul,  
 Paternal warnings graven on that scroll.†

WHEN BRUNSWICK'S prince of fame the pointing star,  
 And MANNERS dealt the light'ning of the war;  
 Like the twinn'd brothers, fam'd in ancient Greece,  
 Who fought with Jason for the sacred fleece,  
 And beauteous Helen from the rape restor'd  
 Of lusty Theseus, that advent'rous Lord :

\* The Arms of the Sackville Family are, Quarterly, Topaz and Ruby  
 —bend vair—The crest, a Star on a Ducal Coronet—The Supporters are  
 Leopards studded with Diamonds.

† The Motto, *Aut nunquam tentes, aut perfice.*

Why



Why didst not thou rush in and seize the prey,  
 And follow where those heroes led the way  
 To fame immortal.—Fast as he could fly,  
 JOVE's messenger, the plume-heel'd MERCURY;  
 Fate's messenger in arms, shouldst thou have fled,  
 Reapt glorious meed, or mingled with the dead.

By envy palsy'd, or by fear unman'd,  
 Bloodless thy sword, inactive was thy hand.  
 The staff of office by un toward stroke,  
 Across the forehead of thine honour broke,  
 Leaves trenchant scars of Sackville's foul disgrace;  
 Blots out the semblance of his ancient race;  
 Leaves him to self, all naked, and forlorn,  
 A mark for cowards, and a butt for scorn.  
 No trophies to thy Country's honour rais'd;  
 Branded, despis'd that name which should be prais'd;  
 Leaves thee fit object of the royal grace,  
 To pardon one whom nothing can disgrace.

To



To hands that never pusht the hostile spear,  
 Or shook the lance—but shook themselves with fear;  
 What frenzy could, 'midst flames of civil war,  
 Entrust the driving of BELLONA's Car?

As well 'gainst hawks the timid dove may fly,  
 Lambs brave the lion, eagles quit the sky  
 Before the mousing-owl, as thou to be  
 Couns'lor or chief, 'gainst sons of liberty.  
 Why must keen insult dart its piquant sting?  
 And folly imp'd like wisdom, raise the wing,  
 To wound the public, or to lift up thee,  
 Thou son of meek-ey'd Peace, and clemency?  
 Can pride itself presume thy hands design'd,  
 Thy nerveless hands, in fetters fast to bind,  
 The sons of freedom, flaming with the zeal  
 Of patriot glory, and their common-weal?

E

Or



Or that such men, such heroes can subdue  
 As you employ'd—or those employ'd *by* you?  
 How must they laugh, and sneer the nations round,  
 When such a man for such a task is found,  
 To scheme the war—to plan the grand design;  
 For *fighting* heroes to point out the line,  
 The host to marshal, and arrange the field,  
 Untaught himself the hostile sword to wield?  
 Who fat, with fame, and glory full in fight,  
 Like eagles hov'ring o'er th' extinguish'd fight;  
 Unmoving, and unmov'd—nor blush'd to see,  
 GRANBY and BRUNSWICK crown'd by victory.

Know, haughty peer! the Western world disdains  
 Such tools of office—and such feeble chains,  
 As hands like thine, or stronger hands of GEORGE,  
 Or heads, or hands more wise, and strong, can forge.—



THRO' the thick shades of falling empire's night,  
 We see the beaming of cælestial light;  
 The light of FREEDOM—whose auspicious ray,  
 Already darts the beam of promis'd day,  
 When liberty's full orb shall radiant rise,  
 Ascendant be, and gild the Western Skies.—

SHORN of its beams (for on this earthly ball  
 Fate hath determin'd empires great must fall)  
 Thine orb, BRITTANIA! with diminisht light,  
 And less'ning glory, now afflicts our fight.

IN dread eclipse to shroud the nations round,  
 And thine own glory darken and confound,  
 Hath mad ambition from its centre hurl'd,  
 An orb, once glory of the modern World.—

ENOUGH,



ENOUGH, my Lord!—we need no prophet's ken,  
 To judge of empire's fall—or fall of men.  
 Experience, wisdom's mistress, man's best friend,  
 Marks out their limits, and points out their end.  
 All have their flux, and reflux, like the tide:  
 And boyant most when likeliest to subside.  
 On pride's blown bladders gallantly we swim,  
 The slaves of fashion, and the dupes of whim.  
 We laugh with idiot-joy on ruins brink;  
 The bubbles burst,—we wonder, groan, and sink.—

THUS from the EAST, destruction onward came  
 With slow, but certain pace; before her fame.  
 Leasht to her car, ambition strode with pride:  
 Commerce with sail wide-spreading, press'd the tide.  
 Through GREECE and ROME the fell destroyers past;  
 And sped by LUXURY, arriv'd at last

Unhear'd



Unheard, unheeded, to fair Albion's shore  
 And fate itself decrees,—they part no more?

O! HARSH decree! can nothing then recall  
 To former glory?—and must ENGLAND fall?  
 Must all her honours fade, and glories die?  
 Astrea like, departs sweet liberty?  
 Can Wisdom, heav'n-born wisdom form no plan  
 To save this system, once the boast of man?

No;—fate replies—tho' dreadfull the alarms  
 Of mad'ning war, you fold within your arms  
 A worse destroyer, more malignant foe;  
 Whose subtle poison brings the mighty low:  
 By sure, but slow destruction eats its way,  
 And makes the haughtiest states its chosen prey.



THAN arms feverer, LUXURY impends ;  
 And, fyren like, excites to joys she ends.  
 Soft sunk on down, in dull unmanly ease,  
 Of country careless, blest'd themselves to please,  
 Th' inglorious sons of pleasure, stretch their length,  
 Resigning youthfull vigour, joy and strength.  
 Lost in ignoble ease, and soft repose,  
 Lull'd by her music, perfum'd with her rose,  
 The spirit faints of ev'ry god-like deed :  
 Virtue sinks down—ambition's self is dead.  
 With nerveless arm the foldier lifts his sword :  
 And Freedom's call becomes an empty word.  
 The MUSES hang their instruments of praise  
 On faded Laurels, and on mourning bays.  
 The arts all droop—nor SCIENCE lifts the wing :  
 No bards, save laureat bards, are rais'd to sing.

- Tho'



Tho' sprung and nurtur'd by the soft'ring side  
Of golden commerce, plenty's full-blown bride ;  
Like sin's base offspring, LUXURY recoils  
On her own parent—feasts amidst her spoils ;  
Of these voracious, her last meal she makes :  
And thus for CONQUER'D WORLDS, she vengeance takes.

THE END.



The young and nurtured by the following

Of golden cornucopia, the very hills and fields

Like fountains, dropping sweetest waters

On her own pasture—like a child, she feeds

On this abundance, and the world is fed

And thus for countless years, the verdure flows

THE END







